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ABSTRACT

This book examines identity formation processes among a cohort of upper middle class adolescent females at Best Academy, an elite, private, independent, single-sex high school for girls. Chapter 1, "Introduction," defines the issue. Chapter 2, "Inside Best Academy: Socialization in the Private Girls' School," examines school structures, curricular forms, and practices that organize social relations in private, single-sex high schools, discussing evidence of social class as a principle organizing code of social relations at Best Academy through which other important and interrelated dimensions are filtered. Chapter 3, "Class Identities in the Borderlands," presents the lived voices and experiences of Best Academy students as they narrate class identity processes, suggesting that class is a border zone where girls actively reshape what it means to be classed and gendered, repositioning themselves as upper middle class girls in relation to meanings and social practices that have been presented to them. Chapter 4, "Race Identities in the Borderlands," explores the constitution of race identities inside a predominantly white school where white girls engage in their own struggles around what it means to be white in a white-washed educational site. Chapter 5, "On the Horizon/At the Frontier: Girls' Projections for the Future," explains the need to shift girls' future projections along trajectories of career, marriage, and family at the frontiers of post-feminist ideology and broader structural shifts in the economy. Chapter 6, "Schooling Our Daughters," hears the voices of parents regarding school choice and expectations for their children's future. Chapter 7, "Conclusion: Repositioning Identities at/in the Center," reviews the study's main findings and implications and makes recommendations for meaningful future work. An appendix presents methodology and research design. (Contains references.) (SM)

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